

Mr. Wilde Sanguine About Vera.

A MIRROR reporter, disappointed in not seeing a dress rehearsal of Vera at the Union Square Theatre yesterday, it being postponed until Friday evening, called on Oscar Wilde at the Brunswick in hopes of obtaining some interesting details regarding the production. After being assured that a regular cut-and-dried interview was not to be inflicted upon him, Mr. Wilde launched into a confidential chat, something as follows:

"There is nothing much new that I can tell you. You see, I've been interviewed so much, that the story must be familiar."

A question was hazarded as to what would be the result should Vera prove unsuccessful. "Oh, now, I don't wish to entertain such a possibility. It cannot fail, but must be a success. Mounted as it will be and in the hands of such a good company, I cannot see how it can be otherwise than a success. Yet while attending rehearsals I find each time so many new things to learn. Really, we should all be stage carpenters; then we would understand all the minute details which most managers are unacquainted with, until they are brought face to face with them at rehearsals. Dramatists and actors are on the same level—neither one below or above that line. The dramatist writes his best thoughts into a play and the actor endeavors by facial expression and action to present the same to his audience, which is quite as important."

"Then you claim that the success of a piece is in the acting?"

"Where the play is not really bad—yes. In olden times fine things were written, but principally intended to be uttered by mouth alone. Now we write to have our ideas acted. In old French plays you will find between each line large gaps. These admit of proper action. A person feels pain and shows the feeling before it can be told off in words. Hence the pauses between sentences, if in the hands of artists, can be made exceedingly interesting, and that is the beauty of successful play-writing, and in your own line—brevity—doing away with and cutting out all superfluous matter."

"Of course you are pleased with your company?"

"Very much. Miss Prescott's Emilia, in her support of Salvini, decided me to give my play to her. That was a great performance. In case Vera should prove a failure it will further teach me and give rise to the question, 'Why is it?'"

"But haven't you another play to follow Vera?"

"Yes, I have; but it has not been announced. It is a story of the Sixteenth century, and I've named it The Duchess of Padua. I began writing it while here before, but found myself unable to make headway while rushing around the country in trains. So when I went home I spent three months in Paris, and if Vera is a success I should like very much to put it on here. Unlike England, you have no provinces; but with Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago and other large cities, you have distinct and great audiences."

At this juncture a salver of mail matter was brought to Mr. Wilde, and the reporter considerably withdrew.